

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER
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Amendments to Specification

Page 5, lines 17-25:

Another aspect of the invention, briefly illustrated in Fig. 1, comprises the venting of the inlet fuel distributor 10 by means of a vent pipe 28 under the control of an exhaust valve 30 in response to the controller 21. This will assure that there is fuel throughout the entire length of the inlet fuel distributor 10 when fuel is first supplied during startup of the fuel cell stack, whereby to avoid difficulties of uneven fuel distribution among the various cells, as described hereinbefore. This is described more fully with respect to Figs. 6 and 10-12 hereinafter.

Page 8, line 14 through page 9, line 4:

The fuel inlet tube 54 may have ~~a purge~~ an exhaust valve 57 operated by a controller 56 in response to a hydrogen sensor 59. In this way, when fuel is first introduced into the tube 54 on startup, the air or inert gas standing in the tube 54 may be vented into an air exit manifold (e.g., 90 in Fig. [17]) 9). This assures that fuel will enter all the fuel flow fields 58 of all of the fuel cells 13 simultaneously, prior to the controller connecting a load, such as an auxiliary load, to assist in startup, without individual fuel cell fuel starvation, voltage reversal, or carbon corrosion, which could occur with uneven distribution of fuel to the different fuel cells upon startup. Instead of utilizing a hydrogen sensor to determine when the valve 57 may be closed, the controller 56 may hold the valve 57 open for a predetermined adequate amount of time, after which the valve 57 may be closed and the auxiliary load connected when hydrogen in the fuel cells generates open circuit voltage. Instead of venting to an air exit manifold, the purge gas may be vented to a positive pressure safety enclosure, surrounding the entire fuel cell power plant, for dilution with air, or the purged ~~air~~ gas may be vented into the cathode, where any small amounts of fuel therein may react with air in an insignificant manner.

Page 16, lines 2 through 12:

An inlet fuel distributor (10-10d) has a permeable baffle (39, 54, 54a, 60) between a fuel supply pipe (11, 83) and a fuel inlet manifold (12, 53, 53a, 63) causing fuel to be uniformly distributed along the length of the fuel inlet manifold. A surface (53, 68) may cause impinging fuel to turn and flow substantially omnidirectionally improving its uniformity. Recycle fuel may be provided (25, 71) into the flow downstream of the fuel inlet distributor. During startup, fuel or inert gas within the inlet fuel distributor and the fuel inlet manifold may be vented through an exhaust valve (57, 86) in response to a controller (58, 79) so as to present a uniform fuel front to the inlets of the fuel flow fields (58).